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Message Text

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22
ACTION IO-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9660
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 339

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, FI
SUBJECT: FINLAND'S ROLE IN MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS

REF: STATE 37592

1. DCM ROBERT B. HOUSTON, JR., HAS BEEN DESIGNATED MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS OFFICER; SUBSTITUTE WILL BE NAMED LATER AS DCM EXPECTS BE ON HOME LEAVE DURING FIRST WEEKS OF 31ST UNGA.

2. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PARA 7 REFTEL FOLLOW:

(A) FINNISH MULTILATERAL GOALS IN 1976 ARE NOT LIKELY BE MUCH DIFFERENT THAN IN PAST: SHOW ITSELF BE A "USEFUL NEUTRAL" (ALTHOUGH ITS GEOGRAPHIC POSITION AND ACTIVE DOMESTIC LEFTISTS PREVENT TRUE NEUTRALITY) IN EAST-WEST CONTEXT. CSCE PHASE III WAS FINLAND'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT AS "USEFUL NEUTRAL" IN EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONTEXT AND FINNS' HOPE CSCE FOLLOWUP WILL BRING NEW GAINS IN SAME CONTEXT. FINNS HAVE MADE NICHE FOR THEM-SELVES IN UN DISARMAMENT FIELD (ALTHOUGH MUCH LESS SUCCESSFUL WITH REGIONAL DISARMAMENT INITIATIVES) AND CLEARLY WANT TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT MATTERS. THEY WILL WANT TO CONTINUE KEY ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING UN PEACEKEEPING ACTIVITIES. IN NORTH-SOUTH MATTERS, FINNS LIKE TO
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MOLYCODDLE THIRD WORLD, ALTHOUGH AS RESOURCE-POOR, INDUSTRALIZED

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COUNTRY, FINLAND HAS ECONOMIC INTERESTS WHICH BASICALLY CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF THIRD WORLD. FINLAND IS ALSO FAR FROM UN RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF AID GIVING. GOF BASICALLY SATISFIED WITH NUMBERS OF FINNS SERVING AT UN, BUT WAS DISAPPOINTED LAST YEAR IN FAILING GET PART SEAT AT CIEC OR SEAT ON WORLD COURT. AT UN, GOF LIKELY CONTINUE DISARMAMENT ACTIVISM IN 1976.

(B) GOF COORDINATES MULTILATERAL POLICY MOST CLOSELY WITH SWEDEN BUT ALSO WITH OTHER NORDICS. WITHIN NORDIC GROUPING, FINLAND SOMETIMES ISOLATED BECAUSE GOF PREOCCUPIED WITH RELATIONSHIP TO USSR, ALTHOUGH FINNS LIKE TO DUPLICATE SWEDISH VOTING. FINNS IN ANY CASE CARRY LESS WEIGHT IN NORDIC DECISION MAKING THAN ANY COUNTRY EXCEPT ICELAND.

(C) GOF INSTRUCTS DELEGATES TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS REGARDING EXPECTED MAJOR ISSUES. FINNISH COMMUNICATIONS GENERALLY GOOD ENOUGH PERMIT FINNISH DELATIONS REPORT IN TIMELY FASHION AND RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

(D) HEADS OF FINNISH DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE RESPONSIVE TO GOF CONTROL.

(E) GOF HAS WELCOMED CONSULTATIONS WITH US IN ADVANCE OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND TYPICALLY RECEIVES COURTEOUSLY BUT WITHOUT COMMITMENT US REPRESENTATIONS ON PARTICULAR ISSUES. WE WOULD DESCRIBE OUR INTERVENTIONS HOWEVER AS EFFECTIVE MORE IN SENSE OF GETTING FINNS FOCUS ON QUESTION EARLY THAN IN PERSUADING THEM CHANGE THEIR MINDS AFTER THEY HAVE REACHED DECISION. MFA DOES NOT TAKE INITIATIVE CONSULT WITH THIS EMBASSY IN ADVANCE OF MEETINGS AND HAS APPROACH US ONLY ON SUCH PARTICULAR ISSUES AS SUPPORT FOR FINN FOR AN ELECTIVE OFFICE IN AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION.
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